

# Section III

## Assisted Housing Inventory and Services

### A. Summary of Assisted & Subsidized Housing

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**Types of Assisted Housing** Assisted housing are units that received public funds that supported the purchase, acquisition, rehabilitation or construction—usually through capital loans or grants. A wide variety of assisted housing is available in King County. This financial support ensures that the units remain affordable to low or moderate-income households for the long term but are generally not considered a form of rental subsidy associated with either a tenant or a unit. In some cases, public funds can also contribute to the financial support of the ongoing operations and maintenance of the units. Assisted units include emergency shelter, transitional and permanent housing. The following is a general list of the forms of capital assistance in place in King County:

- Publicly funded capital loans and grants through state, county and city funding sources for acquisition/purchase and rehabilitation of existing housing stock and new construction of units predominantly owned and operated by non-profit housing developers and housing authorities.
- Privately funded capital loans and grants from banks, corporations, endowments and trust funds.
- Low-income tax credits for rehabilitation and new construction of units for low to moderate and mixed-income communities as well as bond financing programs serving low and mixed-income communities. Tax credits and bonds are issued through the Washington State Housing Finance Commission.

As of June 1998 the King County Housing and Community Development inventory of assisted housing includes a total of 16,218 rental units for the County outside Seattle. A substantial share of assisted housing is owned and operated by non-profit housing developers.

**Subsidized Rental Housing** Subsidized housing includes ongoing rental subsidies, the majority of which are issued and managed by housing authorities. Rental subsidies are either associated with a recipient household or with a specific unit or units in a project-based subsidized complex.

If a rental subsidy is *tenant-based*, that subsidy *is given to the household* and helps subsidize their rent in any unit in the open market within specified geographic parameters. The subsidy follows the tenant household and applies wherever they are living. A household can move from place to place and not lose its rental subsidy. Common forms of tenant-based assistance or rental subsidy come from Housing Authority Section 8 certificates and vouchers, and Shelter Plus Care rental assistance vouchers for homeless people with disabilities.

When a rental subsidy is *project-based*, it *is associated with specific units* in a specific building and remains with the unit. Should a household move from a project-based unit, they do not take the subsidy with them. Qualified new residents in that subsidized unit enjoy the subsidy.

**There are approximately 46,000 assisted and subsidized rental units in King County, including Seattle.** Roughly 55 percent of the assisted and subsidized rental housing in the county is located in Seattle and 45 percent is outside Seattle. Distribution of types of units is shown in the table below.

**Table 3-1**  
**Assisted Rental Housing in King County – 1998**  
**(Approximate number)**

<b>Rental Housing Type</b>	<b>City of Seattle</b>	<b>County Outside Seattle</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Capital Funded Units	16,522	14,962	31,484	69%
Capital Funded Beds	408	810	1,218	3%
Project-based Section 8	3,532	446	3,978	9%
Section 8 Vouchers/Certificates	4,471	3,971 <sup>1</sup>	8,442	18%
Shelter + Care <sup>2</sup> Vouchers	388	190	578	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,321</b>	<b>20,379</b>	<b>45,700</b>	
<b>Percent of Total</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45%</b>		

Source: City of Seattle 1999-2000 draft Consolidated Plan; King County Housing Authority; Renton Housing Authority; Plymouth Housing Group (Shelter + Care); and King County Housing & Community Development inventory of assisted housing with public funding. In general, both the City of Seattle and King County databases include housing subsidized via major public funders (federal programs, public housing, tax credits, and state and local programs). They do not include DSHS residential programs (e.g., adult family homes, nursing homes, and certain types of group living). Some group homes are included if they had capital funding from one of the federal, state, or local housing capital fund sources. Affordability levels of the housing varies.

<sup>1</sup> Includes 234 Renton Housing Authority and 3,737 King County Housing Authority Section 8 units.

<sup>2</sup> Shelter + Care is a tenant-based rental assistance grant for homeless people with disabilities. The number of units rented varies, but was 578 as of April 1999.

**Variety of local, state, and federal funding sources support the assisted housing stock.** The assisted units in the Consortium have been developed using state and local funds including CDBG, HOME, the Washington State Housing Trust Fund, mortgage bond financing, and low-income tax credits administered through the Washington Housing Finance Commission. King County has also demonstrated a substantial commitment to assisted housing by establishing the Housing Opportunity Fund (HOF), a source of local funds for housing development. Through the HOF, King County has allocated \$10.5 million since 1990.

In addition, the Consortium has units funded through such federal programs as McKinney homeless assistance programs (Shelter Plus Care and Single Room Occupancy Moderate Rehabilitation), Section 811 and 202 housing for seniors and people with disabilities, the Housing Opportunity for People with AIDS program, and more.

***Expirations of federal subsidies in privately owned buildings***

A recent analysis of potential loss of Section 8 subsidies in privately owned developments concluded that 27 percent of the 2,459 Section 8 units in the Consortium are at high risk of being lost. These were associated with subsidy levels at 90 to 100% in a tight market. Units subsidized at a higher level (100 percent or more) and those managed by non-profit owners are at lower risk of being lost. The housing market continues an aggressive incline in prices, which increases the risk of loss of units affordable to low-income households, including a loss of Section 8 housing.

## **B. Housing Owned and Managed by the King County Housing Authority**

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Of the over 20,000 assisted housing units and housing vouchers identified in Table 3-1, a significant portion of them are made available through the King County Housing Authority.

As the public housing authority for unincorporated areas and the suburban cities of King County, the King County Housing Authority (KCHA) responds to locally identified needs with a full range of resources and a variety of housing and service programs. KCHA provides affordable workforce housing and low income housing along with a strong emphasis on housing preservation, neighborhood revitalization, resident independence and economic self-sufficiency.

Declining federal funds for support of low-income housing combined with rising housing costs places increasing responsibility on housing authorities to look for other support for their housing endeavors. KCHA has expanded partnerships with cities, the county and state governments to extend the supply of housing. As of its 1998 annual report, 47 percent of the inventory of the King County Housing Authority operated independently of ongoing federal subsidies, and only 13 percent of public housing operating support was derived from HUD.<sup>3</sup>

KCHA administers 11,626 units of housing dispersed among 23 suburban cities and unincorporated areas of King County. Housing programs include:

- public housing for families, senior citizens and people living with disabilities;
- affordable work force housing;
- emergency and transition facilities for homeless and special needs populations;
- homeownership initiatives;
- Section 8 certificate and voucher programs, as well as
- home repair and weatherization for private dwellings.

KCHA also provides tax exempt financing to a variety of housing developers. KCHA partners with a broad array of non-profit organizations to provide childcare, youth recreation, education and literacy, health care, employment, citizenship programs and homemaking services to residents and surrounding communities. In addition, welfare reform has placed housing authorities increasingly in the position of implementing or partnering in programs enhancing job skills of residents.

## **1. Public Housing**

As of April 1999 KCHA manages 3,384 public housing units for families, seniors, and people with special needs in the county outside Seattle and Renton. The stock of public housing is quite diverse, ranging from single family to townhouse to multifamily developments. Most family developments are small, having 30 units or less.

The breakdown by unit size of the Authority's public housing inventory, excluding the most recent acquisitions, is shown below. The new acquisition consists of 2 and 3 bedroom units. Of the 3,319 units shown, nearly three-quarters (72 percent) contain 2 bedrooms or fewer.

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<sup>3</sup> King County Housing Authority Annual Report, 1998, page 1.

**Table 3-2**  
**KCHA Public Housing by Unit Size**

Size of Unit	Number of Units	Percent
Studio	124	4%
1 bedroom	1,195	36%
2 bedroom	1,055	32%
3 bedroom	770	23%
4 bedroom	158	5%
5 bedroom	17	<1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,319*</b>	

\*Excludes the most recent KCHA acquisition which consists of units with 2 and 3 bedrooms; there are a total of 3384 public housing units.

Only 23 percent of the public housing units held by the housing authority are 3-bedroom, and a scant 5 percent are 4-bedroom units. This means people on the waiting list for larger units are much more difficult to house adequately in public housing. The problem is not likely to be alleviated with section 8 certificates and vouchers because of the limited availability of large units in an acceptable price range.

Current occupants of public housing include 708 disabled households, 753 elderly, and 324 disabled households over 62 years of age. There are currently 2,401 on the waiting list for public housing including 205 disabled households, 576 elderly, and 53 households both elderly and disabled.

### ***Condition and Maintenance of Public Housing***

Generally speaking, most of the public housing units are in good condition. 1998 saw the continuation of the housing authority's upgrade program with the completion of over \$7 million in additional construction to replace aging building systems and modernize building interiors. The King County Housing Authority's Comprehensive Grant Program's Five-Year Action Plan identifies specific rehabilitation projects and is updated on an ongoing basis. Rehabilitation and repair funds are distributed using the following list of priorities:

1. Correct life, safety, and emergency conditions.
2. Meet statutory or other legally mandated requirements.
3. Protect the structural integrity to ensure the long-term viability of the buildings.
4. Meet energy conservation standards.
5. Increase tenant safety and security.
6. Improve the overall appearance and livability of the units.

7. Develop resident programs.
8. Improve management and operations.

The KCHA continues to convert 5 percent of the units to full handicapped accessibility and to meet other necessary requirements when substantial alterations are made to public housing developments.

The KCHA has identified one public housing complex, Park Lake Homes I in White Center, as severely distressed. Park Lake I is the KCHA's oldest and largest public housing complex, consisting of 536 units that were built in 1942. Engineering reports reveal structural deficiencies in the foundations, seismic deficiencies, and electrical and plumbing hazards and inefficiencies that cause very high utility costs. These deficiencies would continue to inflate the cost of operating this housing over the years. In the long run, redeveloping the homes will be more cost effective than rehabilitating the units due to lead paint and asbestos removal and other costly procedures.

In addition, Park Lake I has the highest concentration of racial and ethnic minorities of any KCHA public housing complex (74%), has a very large concentration of families with children (69%), and is located in a census tract with the highest concentration of very low-income households (over 51%) in the County outside Seattle.

The KCHA is considering whether to apply for a HOPE VI Revitalization grant which could provide up to \$35 million and additional Section 8 vouchers for the redevelopment of Park Lake Homes into a mixed income community with a broader range of housing types, including public housing, market-rate rental and ownership housing. The KCHA has pledged to replace all low-income units lost, if the HOPE VI application is successful, on a one-to-one basis.

KCHA's plan for replacement of the low-income units is to project-base a number of units at properties they own in other parts of the County and at other apartment units, including the North and East areas of the County where there are job opportunities but where there is a shortage of low-income housing opportunities. Project-basing means that KCHA will subsidize units that are currently renting at or near market rents, as affordable Section 8 units. A low-income tenant generally pays no more than 30% of their income for a subsidized Section 8 unit.

Market rate units that are converted to low-income units in the replacement plan will then be replaced in the market rate rental portion of the housing at the new development at Park Lake. The net effect will be no loss of units for both low-income and moderate-income renters. The intended effect is to deconcentrate the public housing units from one area of the County and to spread low-income units out across the Consortium, thereby enhancing

housing choice for low-income households. At the same time, the infusion of a quality mixed-income housing community into the White Center neighborhood is intended to spur economic opportunities in that neighborhood.

Displaced households from Park Lake will be given enhanced choices in housing, including moving into the newly subsidized units in other parts of King County which may have different employment and educational opportunities, moving into other KCHA public housing units in the County, using Section 8 vouchers to secure housing in the private market and moving in to Park Lake after (and perhaps during) the redevelopment process.

The comprehensive planning process for the Park Lake redevelopment will take place over many years and will involve Park Lake residents, community service providers, and the larger White Center residential community. KCHA has involved the larger White Center community through some key local organizations: 1) the White Center Resident Leadership Council (“WCRLC”), a temporary group formed to develop a White Center Strategic Plan, and any successor organization of the WCRLC that develops out of the strategic planning process, in order to coordinate the Park Lake HOPE VI application with their work; and 2) the North Highline Unincorporated Area Council<sup>4</sup>, a community council recognized by King County, which is also represented on the WCRLC.

## **2. Tenant-Based Assistance**

Tenant-based assistance is available through the Section 8 program. KCHA administers a substantial program of a maximum of 3,321 units, including 2,409 certificates and 912 vouchers, and a 15 unit Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation project. In addition, at any given time there are 1,200 to 1,400 subsidy holders that have transferred to KCHA from other jurisdictions. Further, KCHA offers targeted programs—a total of 848 units—which direct subsidies to the following people, as of May 1999:

- 41 people who are mentally ill;
- 25 people who are terminally ill;
- 117 victims of domestic violence;
- 65 homeless families moving from transitional housing;
- 200 units for unification of families; and
- 400 units assisting younger people with disabilities.

The King County Housing Authority continues to offer the Family Self-Sufficiency Program which has expanded from the original limit of 25 units in

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<sup>4</sup> Unincorporated Area Councils (UAC) are an element of the Citizen Participation Initiative to enhance opportunities for public involvement and to improve citizen access to the information and services provided by King County government. The NHUAC is one of six (6) UACs recognized by King County Council Motion. UACs provide the County with community input on behalf of citizens living within the geographic boundary of the UAC, and follow requirements established by the County, including a public and democratic process for voting and choosing its officers and board members.

1992 to the current limit of 628. KCHA also owns and operates a total of 174 Section 8 New Construction units for seniors. Seventy-two of these are located in Bothell in north King County and 102 are located in Burien, in the south.

The following shows the Section 8 certificates and vouchers in use as of May 1999 by household type and unit size.

**Table 3-3**  
**Section 8 Certificates and Vouchers by Unit Size and Household Type**

<b>Household</b>	<b>Number of Bedrooms</b>						<b>Total</b>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	
Elderly	419	83	23	3	3	0	531
Family	41	1,100	953	160	41	18	2,313
Disabled	502	246	115	21	7	2	893
<b>Total</b>	<b>962</b>	<b>1,429</b>	<b>1,091</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>3,737</b>



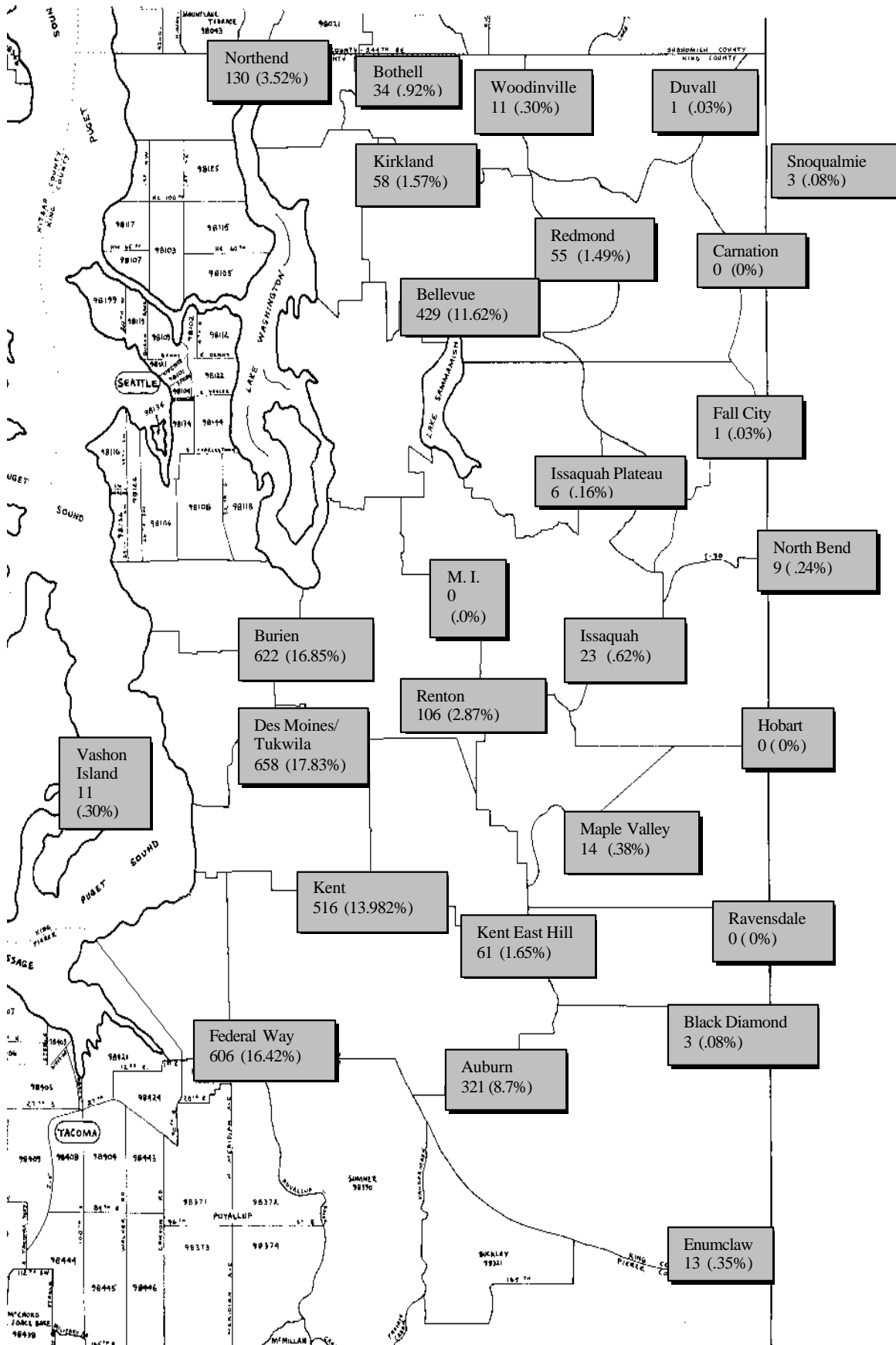
The majority of Section 8 participants live in South King County. With the exception of Bellevue, which is home to about 12 percent of the households, there is very little participation in the north, east and rural areas of the county. The main reason for this is that housing is more affordable in South King county; even with a voucher to assist with rental costs, households still need to find housing they can afford.

**Table 3-4**  
**Distribution of Section 8 Certificates and Vouchers by Subregion -**  
**January 1999**

<b>Subregion</b>	<b>Percent</b>
East Rural	0.4%
East Urban	15.5%
North Urban	4.7%
South Urban	78.3%
South Rural	0.8%
Vashon	0.3%

Source: King County Housing Authority

**Figure 3-1**  
**King County Section 8 Certificate and**  
**Voucher Distribution – as of 1/1/99**



Households with vouchers have been most successful in locating housing in South Urban cities. Nearly 18 percent are located in Des Moines and Tukwila; 17 percent in Burien; 16 percent in Federal Way; and 14 percent in Kent.

### **3. Resident Services**

KCHA's Resident Services Department facilitates partnerships with residents and service providers to strengthen resident communities, improve quality of life, and support independence and economic self-sufficiency. Resident programs include support services for seniors and younger people with disabilities, drug elimination programs for public housing, new employment initiatives, citizenship and ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, youth recreation and education services, translation services, the organization of Resident Councils, and family self-sufficiency programs for Section 8 and public housing residents.

KCHA recently contracted for a survey of residents in public housing to ascertain needs in several areas.<sup>5</sup> Interviews were completed with about 75 percent of the households in occupied units in 11 complexes. Several findings are notable for both housing planning and services:

- Respondents had relatively poor job stability or were in a position of high mobility—over two-thirds had held their current job less than a year.
- Over 60 percent responded that they had difficulty paying bills at least once during the last year and 30 percent said they did not have enough money to make ends meet at the end of the month.
- Of the households surveyed, a large number (64 percent) contained at least one family member born outside of the United States. There were 48 different countries of origin given—35 percent were from Russia or Eastern Europe.
- Over half the responding households contained at least one person who was not a US citizen.
- Respondents spoke 32 different languages in the home—most common were Russian, Ukrainian, Vietnamese, Somali and Spanish.
- The survey also found that persons born outside the United States had larger families than was true of those born in the United States.
- Of the elderly persons surveyed, 59 percent had a disability.
- One third of elderly and disabled people surveyed reported they did not get enough help with chores, primarily because they could not afford it.
- Job training and referrals, and help with emergency utilities were most commonly given needed, but unmet, service requirements. Lack of information about existing services as the most commonly referenced barrier.

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<sup>5</sup> KCHA Resident Survey completed by Harachi and Associates, March 1999.

The survey points to a number of needs which impact planning for these households. Given the high legal immigrant population in public housing, services softening their transition into self-sufficiency are appropriate. These include access to translation services, and ESL and citizenship classes, along with employment training and job referrals.

Recently KCHA Resident Services Department significantly increased its activities by partnering with ten new service providers to offer services on site to residents. Spending for resident services increased by over 80 percent between fiscal years 1998 and 1999.

In 2001, the Resident Services Department is involving residents of Park Lake Homes, residents of the larger White Center community and community organizations in a HOPE VI application planning dialogue. The dialogue will cover all aspects of the planning process, including but not limited to unit mix, housing design, density and open space, replacement housing options, relocation services, continued social service support and housing options in the new Park Lake community. If the HOPE VI application is funded, the community planning process will continue for several years.

### **Resident Initiatives**

KCHA encourages the formation and involvement of resident councils in public housing developments to 1) serve as liaisons between tenants and management, and 2) to initiate opportunities for expanded on-site supportive service efforts.

Several social service agencies provide services within KCHA developments around the County and provide a wide array of services to tenant households, including families, the elderly, children and youth. KCHA has established partnerships with a wide variety of community-based organizations to better serve the needs of residents within public housing developments, supporting efforts of residents to achieve self-sufficiency and maximize their independence. Services provided through such partnerships include:

- The Park Lake Career Development Center, providing employment-related services including literacy classes, job skills training, job placement, and childcare support to residents of the White Center area,
- Expanded English-language and citizenship services for King County residents in all regions of the County.
- Expanded youth services programming, providing increased access to recreation and diversion activities for low-income youth throughout the county.
- Implementation of program to train residents to provide culturally appropriate in-home childcare.

## 4. KCHA Initiatives

KCHA is involved in a number of new and strengthened initiatives to provide housing opportunities to an array of households each year. These include:

- Acquisition and rehabilitation of distressed properties.
- Preservation of endangered affordable housing.
- Tax exempt bond financing for private and nonprofit developers.
- Partnerships with nonprofit organizations to finance, develop, or manage community facilities and housing for households with special needs.
- Community development activities, including repairs to owner-occupied homes, facade improvement programs; and weatherization of multifamily buildings, mobile homes, and single-family houses.
- HOPE VI application planning process:
  - Planning meetings, with the residents of Park Lake Homes, the broader White Center community, service providers, the County and the Consortium for a HOPE VI application to revitalize Park Lake Homes into a community with a broader range of housing types. KCHA is working with the White Center Resident Leadership Council (“WCRLC”), a group formed to develop a strategic plan for White Center, and any successor organization of the WCRLC that may develop out of the strategic plan, to coordinate the HOPE VI project with their work. The HOPE VI project is consistent with the WCRLC Housing Committee’s vision for housing in White Center. KCHA is also involving other community organizations in the HOPE VI planning process, including the North Highline Unincorporated Area Council.
  - Planning meetings with the WCRLC, other community organizations, the County and the Consortium on coordinating the HOPE VI project planning with the development of additional non-housing service and resource needs of the community.
  - Working with the WCRLC, other community organizations, the County and the Consortium on initiatives to address additional housing needs identified by the community, such as improving privately-owned substandard housing in the region.

By June 30, 2000, the King County Housing Authority will have obligated expenditures of \$4.4 million for the rehabilitation and/or modernization of 605 senior and family units at 10 developments using 1998 CDBG funds. Additionally, during this time, improvements will be made to common areas and management offices. The scope of work includes sprinkler installation and fire alarm upgrades at two senior high-rise building, deck replacements, heating and electrical systems improvements, and interior remodels.

Several factors influence the direction of KCHA initiatives—welfare reform and reduction in federal funding for housing, passage of the Quality Housing

and Work Responsibility Act of 1998, loss of affordable housing because of conversion to market-rate housing, and loss of affordable housing due to deteriorating conditions.

***Welfare Reform  
and Reduction in  
Federal Funding***

Welfare reform threatens to reduce revenues to housing authorities, at the same time federal funds for housing support are more limited.<sup>6</sup> Under TANF, households have lower benefits, which reduces the amount they can contribute for housing to any housing that found with certificates or vouchers. In an already limited market, this further reduces the number of units available to extremely low-income households.

Public housing residents facing reduction in TANF benefits because of time limits or work-related sanctions have less money for rent. This reduces the revenue for housing authorities to operate and maintain units. The loss of revenue is an incentive to promote job skills development and other programs to increase the income of tenants. At the same time, it encourages the increase in the number of tenants who are able to pay higher rents.

The King County Housing Authority has instituted a number of programs to increase the earning capacity of residents and to link them to needed services, as discussed earlier. Participation in the family self-sufficiency program has increased.

At the same time, the KCHA has established goals to expand housing programs for low-income households, the homeless, and households with special needs. However, meeting these goals means continued focus on strategies that build partnerships with communities, cities, and other funders to increase the amount of housing affordable to low-income households.

***Quality Housing  
and Work  
Responsibility Act  
of 1998***

This newly enacted law has several provisions which could threaten loss of public housing and vouchers. One provision gives housing authorities more latitude in deciding to demolish units, and to admit a lower percentage of low-income households in favor of moderate income households.<sup>7</sup>

Housing authorities may petition to HUD for permission to demolish units for a variety of reasons and transfer that funding to vouchers and certificates. That step would reduce guarantees for extremely low income families, and force them to relocate and find housing in the community. A further threat associated with conversion of public housing to vouchers is that vouchers are subject to annual appropriations, while public housing is a more permanent asset.

Some communities, 100 in all, will be allowed to transfer housing authority functions to local government control. These communities, with HUD

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<sup>6</sup> Sard, Barbara and Jennifer Daskal, "Housing and Welfare Reform", *Shelterforce*, March/April 1998, 18-19.

<sup>7</sup> Ranghellie, Lisa, "1,000,000 Homes at Risk", *Washington News and Views*, March/April 1999, p. 26.

approval, will be able to design housing programs which might, in some cases, reduce federal protections for tenants.

Finally, residents who do not, or cannot, comply with the community work requirement (8 hours of community service monthly if they are not working or in a self-sufficiency program) are subject to non-renewal of their lease. This makes it easier to terminate households with lowest incomes.

Through a collaborative effort, the King County Housing Authority and the Seattle Housing Authority have applied to HUD for 1,400 new Section 8 vouchers to provide rental subsidies to current and recent TANF recipients making the transition from welfare to work.

### ***Preservation and Revitalization***

Nationally, there is significant political pressure to free valuable land for market-rate housing development. This encourages housing authorities to reduce the stock of public housing in favor of vouchers, which threatens the security blanket for households most in need.

There are two factors which commonly result in loss of affordable housing. The first is loss of units in fairly good condition which are renting at below-market rates because of ongoing rental assistance contracts with the federal government. Those are in danger of loss to conversion to market-rate housing as owners sell or otherwise choose not to renew their contracts for a variety of reasons, the most common because the contract rents are too low given the local market. The second reason for loss is because of unit deterioration—for example, demolition of an apartment complex and replacement with non-residential development. That loss could also be the result of deteriorating single family housing, such as that owned by elderly households on fixed incomes.

KCHA acquired 691 units in 6 properties in 1997 and 1998, 5 of which properties were expiring federal contracts. The intervention assured continued affordability and minimized displacement of residents.

Using over \$5.2 million in tax exempt bonds and Low Income Housing Tax Credits, plus various state and local funding sources, KCHA completed rehabilitation of Laurelwood Gardens Apartments, a 92 unit family apartment complex. The KCHA purchased the property after the previous owner chose to opt out of a HUD program. Another 203 units were purchased and are being modernized to preserve housing as affordable rental communities. The 3 complexes were built in the late 1970s as low income housing using a USDA subsidized loan program. KCHA intervention prevented loss of these units to market-rate use.

In addition to the preservation of federally subsidized housing, KCHA acquired Continent Court and Sunset Village, two badly deteriorated complexes in the SeaTac community. The purchase of these complexes will

prevent the loss of 326 units of affordable “work force” housing. Over \$5 million in repair, renovations and upgrades are underway to address deferred maintenance and repair issues, including \$2 million from SeaTac, King County and the state. These will be combined with over \$9 million in bond proceeds and nearly \$8 million in Low Income Housing Tax Credit equity to pay for acquisition and rehabilitation.

In 1998, 155 single family homes were repaired using CDBG funds provided by the county and suburban jurisdictions. The weatherization program also provided improvements for 424 units of privately owned rental housing.

In 2001 the KCHA will explore a HOPE VI initiative for Park Lake Homes I in White Center, an area that has been identified in this report as the one census tract in King County with significant concentrations of low-income families with children and minority households. Park Lake I is the KCHA’s largest public housing complex, with a racial and ethnic minority concentration of seventy four percent (74%). The objectives of the HOPE VI, according to KCHA, include the following:

- Redevelop Park Lake as a mixed income community, including home-ownership opportunities
- Reduce the over-concentration of very low-income families and minorities by offering subsidized affordable housing units within the redeveloped mixed income community, and in other parts of the County where there may be different educational and employment opportunities
- Eliminate the physical and social distinction between the Park Lake community and the surrounding neighborhood
- Partner with the School District, the County, the Consortium, community-based organizations, social service providers and the residents of White Center to develop new community resources and expand programs which will assist in the economic revitalization of the community

### ***Housing Finance Activities***

KCHA continues to provide tax exempt financing for developers of affordable housing. Recent activity included a \$13 million issuance to finance the construction of a 296 unit complex (Auburn Court Apartments) for low income elderly and disabled households developed by a non-profit organization. Another \$2.4 million assisted the Mobile Home Stabilization Association purchase and preserve a mobile home park in Redmond. Finally, \$2.6 million was provided for purchase and upgrade of a 72-unit development in Des Moines.

## **5. Mixed Populations in Public Housing**

Federally subsidized high-rise buildings have traditionally housed low-income elderly and disabled adult residents. Federal mandates for housing the homeless and federal prohibition against discrimination on the basis of



disability have caused changes in tenant populations in high-rise buildings. Residences which once housed predominantly elderly populations now house increasing numbers of non-elderly disabled adults, including residents facing challenges of mental illnesses and other cognitive disorders and residents with significant physical disabilities. In 1993, 80 percent of the residents of KCHA's high-rise buildings were elderly; today, that proportion has decreased to 70 percent of residents.

The growing number of non-elderly disabled adult residents, now representing 30 percent of KCHA's high-rise residents, has produced significant changes in service needs among residents. Further, the mixing of elderly residents with non-elderly residents has, at times, produced significant conflict and tension within these developments. Following the recommendations of a task force of diverse stakeholders, KCHA established its Support Services Coordination Program in 1995, to better address the need for adequate supportive services among the residents within these developments and to strengthen resident communities. KCHA currently relies upon funding from the Office of Housing and Urban Development for the operation of this vital program.

An additional challenge facing these mixed population development is the growing number of refugee and immigrant residents, many of whom have very limited English language skills and who lack United States citizenship. Throughout these developments, more than 35% of residents were born outside the United States, representing refugees and immigrants from diverse regions of the world, including Eastern Europe, Asia and Southeast Asia, Latin America and Africa. Through the pursuit of funding opportunities, the utilization of AmeriCorps volunteers and the establishment of partnerships with social service providers, KCHA has expanded the availability of English language and citizenship instruction to these residents, providing increased opportunities for these residents to participate in their developments' communities and to pursue United States citizenship.

## **6. Partnership between King County and the King County Housing Authority**

King County government and the King County Housing Authority have enjoyed an effective and lengthy partnership. The current County Executive supports and values efforts towards creating affordable housing opportunities, and is a visible presence in the community around affordable housing issues. Some examples of this partnership with the Housing authority can be seen in several areas including:

- Receives funds, as KCHA has been a recipient of County administered Housing Finance Program funding including local Housing Opportunity Fund funds for -housing development projects;
- Coordinates with King County around major state and federal issues in regard to low-income housing;

- Participates with King County to ensure maximum participation in the 2000 census in order to ensure accurate counts, especially in the communities of color in order to best respond to community planning and affordable housing needs;
- Collaborates with King County in Transit Oriented Development to create high density, affordable housing around major transit centers;
- Engages in dialogue around the administration and establishment of local priorities for Section 8 vouchers as a result of the Housing Reform Act; and
- Participates in the County's credit enhancement program to lower the cost of housing development;
- Collaborates with King County on a White Center Community Development Strategic Plan to revitalize the White Center community and Park Lake Homes. The KCHA planning process for the exploration of a HOPE VI grant application is a component of a broader community development planning effort led by the County and supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Other planning partners include the Highline School District, the Puget Sound Educational Service District and a White Center Resident Leadership Council (WCRLC). The WCRLC is a temporary body that was formed in the Fall of 2000 for a one-year strategic planning period and is made up of residents of White Center, people who work in or own businesses in White Center and members of the North Highline Unincorporated Area Council. The goal of the WCRLC is to develop a strategic plan and then transform into a Community Development Corporation that can continue to carry out the goals articulated in the plan. The goals of the strategic plan include: the development of a new elementary school, the development of a multicultural community center, the development of quality housing of various types for households with a range of different socioeconomic levels, the rehabilitation of substandard housing in the community and other community-based economic development activities. The new school and community center may be included as part of the HOPE VI initiative to revitalize Park Lake Homes into a mixed-income housing community if that grant is pursued and obtained.

## **C. Housing Owned and Managed by the Renton Housing Authority**

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### **1. Public Housing**

The Renton Housing Authority manages 699 assisted units, including public housing, section 8 new construction, and section 8 certificates and vouchers. In addition to these subsidized units, the Renton Housing Authority manages 337 units of housing offered to seniors and those with disabilities at near market rates.

## 2. Tenant Based Assistance

There are eight public housing apartments in Renton, five designated for the elderly and those with disabilities, elderly or non-elderly. The other three apartments are family housing. The number of units by bedroom size is shown below, along with tenant-based information.

The housing authority reports an increased demand for larger units, with a longer waiting time for households with several children. On the other hand, while there are more 1-bedroom units than any other size in public housing, there is a long wait for 1-bedroom units.

The condition of public housing is generally good, although there are rehabilitation needs. Renton did not participate in the Comprehensive Grant Program and did not receive funds for maintenance. The RHA hopes to receive funding in future years for maintenance, which they forecast at \$400,000 a year over a 5 year period. Five percent of the units meet ADA standards.

The Renton Housing Authority manages 114 Section 8 certificates and 120 vouchers, all of which are currently used. There is a waiting list of 341 applicants for these and for the two Section 8 project-based developments.

**Table 3-5  
Renton Housing Authority Unit Size and Program Type**

Program	Number of Bedrooms					Total
	Alcove	1	2	3	4	
Public Housing	32	193	63	42	10	340
Section 8 New Construction	-	125	-	-	-	125
Section 8 Certificates	-	21	50	35	8	114
Section 8 Vouchers	-	50	54	16	-	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>699</b>

There are a number of barriers to finding housing in the area suitable to Section 8 certificate-holders. A significant barrier is that rents exceed the amount tenants can pay under the certificate guidelines. This is especially problematic for larger units, which are more scarce in the rental market. Voucher-holders do not have the same limitations. Tenants are able to pick up the difference in cost between the established rent ceilings and voucher amount, subject to “reasonableness.”

The certificate program is also changing to allow tenants to pick up a little more of the cost, but not to exceed 40 percent of their gross monthly income, and still subject to “reasonableness.” When issued, certificates usually carry the requirement of use within 60 days. The housing authority has discretion

to extend beyond the original 60 days to a maximum of 120 days. Still, households are finding it difficult to locate housing within guidelines. If the certificate is not used within the allotted time, it is assigned to someone else.

Another barrier to finding suitable housing with certificates and vouchers is the program-required lease term of one-year. Landlords that set lease terms of less than a year exclude section 8 tenants, whether this is the intent of the shorter lease term or not. Vacancies with lease periods of 6 or 9 months do not have a long enough lease period to satisfy section 8 requirements.

The Renton Housing Authority does not anticipate any potential loss of project-based Section 8 units or public housing in the near future.

**No resident groups or resident initiatives.** There are no resident groups within the Renton Housing Authority-managed units. They also have no organized resident initiative program.



